

# ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

## *Policies and Procedures*

***Title:*** Contract Air Service

***Number:*** 343.4

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***Originating Office:*** Financial Management Division  
Budget and Fiscal Services Branch

***This Replaces:*** 352.10 Dated 7/06/81

***Distribution:*** Headquarters, Areas, and Locations

This DIRECTIVE, as governed by the FTR and ATR, states authorities that control the use of GSA contract airline service for official travel.

## **1. REFERENCE**

For guidelines on procurement of passenger transportation services, see DIRECTIVE 343.3.

## **2. ABBREVIATIONS**

- ATR - Agriculture Travel Regulations
- FTD - Federal Travel Directory
- FTR - Federal Travel Regulations
- GSA - General Services Administration
- GTR - Government Transportation Request

## **3. FORMS**

- AD-202 - Travel Authorization
- SF-1169 - U.S. Government Transportation Request

## **4. AUTHORITIES**

- ATR 1-1
- FTR 301-15

## **5. POLICY**

It is ARS policy that:

- Contract air service will be used for all ARS official business travel between cities shown in the FTD.
- All exceptions to using contract air service must be according to paragraph G of this DIRECTIVE and guidelines contained in the FTD.

## **6. EXCEPTIONS TO USING CONTRACT AIR SERVICE**

One of the three exceptions listed below must be certified on the travel

authorization (AD-202) in order for ARS employees to receive permission not to use contract air service. The three exceptions, as listed in the FTD, are:

- Space or scheduled flights are not available in time to accomplish the purpose of travel; use of contract service would require the traveler to incur additional unnecessary costs that would increase the total cost of the trip (i.e., overnight lodging or additional per diem or subsistence costs); or
- The contractor's flight schedule is inconsistent with explicit policies of individual Federal departments and agencies, where applicable, to schedule travel during normal working hours; or
- A noncontract carrier offers a lower fare available to the general public, the use of which will result in a lower total trip cost to the Government, to include the combined costs of transportation, lodging, meals, and related expenses.

NOTE: This exception does not apply if the contract carrier(s) offers a comparable fare (same as contract fare or lower) and has seats available at that fare, or if the lower fare offered by a noncontract carrier is restricted to Government and military travelers on official business and may only be purchased with a GTR or Government contractor-issued charge card.

Promotional or restrictive fares may be used by ARS employees when such fares are based on application of the exception in section 6 above. The promotional or restrictive fare should only be used when the traveler can meet the requirements of the stated fare. If an ARS employee fails to meet the requirements of the restrictive fare, through no fault of the U.S. Government, they are personally responsible for the payment of any penalties incurred.

The use of connecting contract air service is encouraged where contract carriers do not provide through service and this connection produces lower transportation costs than direct flights using noncontract carriers. However, lower transportation costs may be offset by increased travel costs, such as per diem, allowable overtime, or lost productive time due to layovers.

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## Administrative Management